

FAOM 4/97

continuation of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/698,034, filed August 15, 1996, now U.S.

Patent No. 5,836,736, which is a divisional of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/415,927, filed March 31, 1995, now U.S. Patent No. 5,660,517, which is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/236,424, filed April 28, 1994, now U.S. Patent No. 5,544,421. Priority to these applications is claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 120. The content of these applications is also incorporated herein by reference.--.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-55, and add new claims 56-63 as follows:

56. A method for processing a workpiece comprising the steps of:
moving a sealed container, holding at least one workpiece in a horizontal orientation,
through an interface port;
moving the sealed container from the interface port to a docking station (X);
unsealing the container at the docking station, by removing a panel of the container, to
provide access to the workpiece in the container;
engaging the workpiece with an engagement head;
moving the workpiece from a horizontal orientation into a vertical orientation;
placing the workpiece on a shelf with the workpiece in a vertical orientation;
lifting the workpiece off of the shelf with a transfer robot;
carrying the workpiece on the robot to a process chamber;
~~opening the process chamber;~~
- Incorrect:
the sealed
container
is not moved
through the
interface port*

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placing the workpiece into the process chamber;
closing the process chamber; and
processing the workpiece in the process

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57. The method of claim 56 where the docking station is within an enclosure of a processing system, further including the steps of opening the interface port in the enclosure before moving the sealed container through the interface port and then closing the interface port after the container had been moved through the interface port.

58. The method of claim 56 further including the step of pivoting the engagement head, to move the workpiece from a horizontal orientation into a vertical orientation.

59. The method of claim 56 further including the step of releasing the workpiece from the engagement head when the engagement head is positioned over the shelf.

60. The method of claim 56 further including the step of moving the container vertically in the docking station.

61. The method of claim 60 wherein the container is moved vertically in the docking station before the container is unsealed.

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62. The method of claim 56 wherein removing the panel of the container places the interior of the container in fluid communication with the workspace within the enclosure.